CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

FA1-00607-1 San Diego Consortium for Regenerative Medicine - CIRM Institute

Facilities Working Group Score: 86

Requested Funding: $50,000,000
FWG Recommended Funding: $43,000,000

Possible points ⇨	Value 25	Leverage 25	Urgency 20	Shared Res 15	Function'ty 15
FWG Score: 86	23	20	14	15	14

PROPOSAL:

This application proposes construction of a new five-story building (one floor of which will be below grade) that would house stem cell researchers from four institutions that have formed a consortium. This is the only consortium formed in response to this RFA. The consortium building would allow co-location of stem cell researchers based at the member institutions.

The 142,058 gross square foot (gsf) building (this is a correction to the application, which indicated 130,907 gsf) is designed to provide a total of 100,572 assignable square feet (asf) and includes space that would be assigned to non-CIRM research activities, but could be devoted to stem cell research at some point. (Because this space is not included as part of the CIRM proposal, the applicant would not be under any legal obligation to use this space for stem cell research. CIRM regulations require that CIRM-funded space must be used for stem cell research for 10 years.)

Space committed to the stem cell program amounts to 71,332 asf (71 percent of total asf) and the non-CIRM space amounts to 29,240 asf (29 percent of total asf). The applicant has allocated the cost of building the CIRM space by assigning two floors to CIRM (67 percent) and one floor to non-CIRM space (33 percent), ancillary and support spaces, however, have been allocated more generously to the CIRM space (71 percent to CIRM and 29 percent to non-CIRM space).

The applicant seeks CIRM funding of $50 million towards a total project cost of $115.2 million. The project will co-locate stem cell researchers by providing laboratory, laboratory support space and new core facilities consisting mainly of new vivarium space and related office, administrative and support space. At occupancy, the facility will house 21 research teams (PIs), 18 of which will be relocating from their home member institutions to the new consortium building. Completion of the project is scheduled for July 2010.

COST:

Cost Summary Table

Cost Category	Total Amount	Amount/PI
Building	$78,578,481	$3,741,832
Group 2 Equipment	22,149,468	1,054,737
Subtotal	100,727,949	4,796,569
Land Value	14,474,077	689,242
Total	$115,202,026	$5,485,811
CIRM Amount	$50,000,000	$2,380,952
Applicant Amount	$65,202,026	$3,104,858

SUMMARY OF FACILITIES WORKING GROUP REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Value— The reviewer noted that value was good and indicated that this is the lowest cost application in the category of CIRM Institutes. The FWG considered the 20 percent lower cost of the project as an offset to the laboratory planner's assignment of a relatively low value and functionality score attributable to the large amount of non-laboratory space included in the project. It was also pointed out that because non-laboratory space is less expensive to build, the overall cost of this proposal is really more comparable to other proposals with higher proportions of laboratory space. It was also noted that because the consortium is creating a new entity with a separate management structure, the building needs to include more administrative space than a typical laboratory building.

Leverage— The reviewer noted that the leverage is above average and is the second highest in the Institute category. This is one of two applications in Part II that included land value as part of leverage. The FWG discussed how they would account for the value of land in the calculation of leverage since the value is based on the present value of expected ground lease payments rather than on actual cost. The applicant indicated that the ground lease with the University of California was in process and that it called for rent at fair market value with the opportunity of rent credits being applied. This credit was characterized by the applicant as equivalent to a donor making a contribution to the applicant. It was decided that each member of the FWG would need to consider this in assigning a score for leverage.

Urgency— The schedule was characterized as highly ambitious. The primary reviewer expressed concern about potential delays arising from outstanding approval of environmental documents and Coastal Commission approval. In response, the applicant stated that the organization has engaged special consultants to successfully navigate the processes for obtaining environmental clearance and Coastal Commission approval. It was noted that project approval is expected in September 2008 with construction starting March 2009.

Shared Resources— It was noted by the reviewer that the formation of a consortium that will co-locate researchers from four institutions was an exciting element of the proposal. The reviewer stated that locating the facility nearly equidistant from the member organizations is ideal.

Functionality— The reviewer noted that functionality was good, given that the application addresses bringing together researchers from four institutions. The laboratory planner expressed his concern regarding the amount of non-laboratory space on the first floor and the reliance on cores at the member institutions' sites located some distance from the facility. The reviewer noted, however, that the non-laboratory spaces such as the conferencing and interactive spaces will help to attract the participation of the vibrant local biotech community. The reviewer disagreed with the laboratory planner's assessment that the lack of cores was a disadvantage. The FWG noted that this applicant received the highest overall score from the GWG in the Part One review, and that the Grants Working Group would have included in its evaluation the functionality of the cores. The applicant noted that the building would contain the most important cores to serve the science in the building and that the more expensive cores, such as Genomics and GNP would be available nearby. The applicant also noted that the primary purpose of the building is to promote collaboration which the design addresses through use of innovative vertical circulation elements in the middle of the laboratories and open spaces; that the conference space is a valued asset that would have international significance in promoting collaboration; and that the facility will accommodate expansion of stem cell research if needed in the future because the non-CIRM laboratory space in the building could be assigned to accommodate future growth in the stem cell research program.

The FWG score for this application was 86. During programmatic review, the FWG voted to recommend funding of $43,000,000, representing 86 percent of the requested amount of $50million.